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Mutual Glasnost

The Russians are coming to U.S. military bases—and we to theirs. The new On-Site Inspection Agency is managing the traffic. ■ BY DAVID RILEY

A little-known, brand new agency stands poised to make history this summer. This month American officials from the On-Site Inspection Agency began visiting Soviet military bases and escorting Soviet inspectors to U.S. bases, in an unprecedented process of mutual openness between adversary nations. This historic experiment, involving 150 of the two countries' military installations, is designed to verify the destruction of nine weapons systems covered by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

The treaty is designed to accomplish what has never happened before: the elimination of an entire class of nuclear weapons. But its most far-reaching impact may well prove to be the inspection procedures it establishes. If successful, the experiment will have implemented the kind of sweeping disarmament of strategic weapons which is currently the subject of U.S.-Soviet START (strategic arms reduction treaty) negotiations. If the experiment fails, prospects for further arms control will suffer a major setback.

The closest the world has come to substantial on-site inspection in the past was after World War I, when the victorious European allies sent 1,500 military inspectors to Germany to confirm that the Kaiser's compatriots were not rearming. What the unwelcome inspectors confirmed was in fact the opposite: Germany was rearming in violation of the Treaty of Versailles. In that instance, on-site inspection did nothing to further the cause of disarmament.

"Everybody's Watching"

"There's a lot of excitement about being involved in an historic development," says Brig. Gen. Roland Lajoie, director of the new agency. "Everybody's watching how well we do." Lajoie heads an interservice, inter-



Heading up the On-Site Inspection Agency is Brig. Gen. Roland Lajoie. "There's a lot of excitement about being involved in an historic development," he says of his agency's novel mission of verifying compliance with the INF treaty.

agency organization with a staff of 125, currently crammed into ragtag temporary quarters in the Coast Guard building overlooking the Anacostia River in southwest Washington. It's a modest setting for making history.

The On-Site Inspection Agency (OSIA) has a carefully prescribed purpose as a data collection and escort agency. It does not set policy, but rather provides information to those who do. Officials in the State and Defense Departments and in the intelligence agencies will evaluate OSIA's information

and then decide whether the Soviet Union is complying with the INF treaty.

The agency's principal functions are threefold: to conduct inspections at 133 military sites in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe; to maintain an around-the-clock monitoring operation at the Soviet assembly plant which has produced SS20s, the principal Soviet INF missile; and to escort Soviet inspectors who will be visiting 26 military sites in the United States and western Europe and monitoring the American plant

which has produced Pershing IIs, the principal American INF weapon.

All this must be done according to a precise timetable, with the first phase beginning this month and ending before Labor Day. Logistical procedures for inspections are spelled out in excruciating detail in 300 pages of documents appended to the treaty. The documents include arrangements with the seven European countries subject to inspection under the Treaty: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, England, East and West Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

Most inspections will be conducted by teams of 10 people, five of them linguists. The two countries will be notified that inspectors are coming through the Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers in Washington and Moscow, which were initially proposed by Senators Sam Nunn, D-Ga., and John Warner, R-Va., and were inaugurated earlier this year. The centers serve as a more elaborate channel of communication than the hot line; they are capable of instantaneously transmitting photographs and maps. The inspection team must be transported to the base within nine hours of entering the host country through designated ports of entry, which for the U.S. are San Francisco and Dulles Airport near Washington.

Accompanied by an escort team from the host country, inspectors will have 24-32 hours to make the inspection using photographic and measuring equipment, and will file a joint report with the escort team before promptly leaving the country. United States escort teams will include two FBI agents. In the event of disagreement over findings, the inspection and escort teams will simultaneously photograph the disputed objects, sign the backs of the photographs, and file both with the inspection report. Disputes will be forwarded to the Special Verification Commission composed of military officials from both countries.

Five Kinds of Inspections

Both sides have the right to conduct the following five kinds of inspection:

■ **Baseline inspections.** The two countries have 60 days, starting July 1, to inspect the 133 Soviet sites and 26 American ones where INF weapons are stored and repaired. The purpose is to verify the inventory of such weapons that the two sides declared they had in the memorandum of understanding attached to the treaty.

The sites include INF bases and support facilities, but not production sites. Fourteen of the American sites are located in the United States, the rest in western Europe. The 14 U.S. sites are found in the following locations, some of them having several sites subject to Soviet inspection: Middle River, Md.; Cape Canaveral, Fla.; Redstone Arse-

nal, Ala.; Fort Sill, Okla.; Pueblo, Colo.; Dudway Proving Grounds, Utah; Fort Huachuca and Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.; and Air Force Plant 19 in San Diego. An additional site, the Longhorn Army Base in Marshall, Texas, may be added.

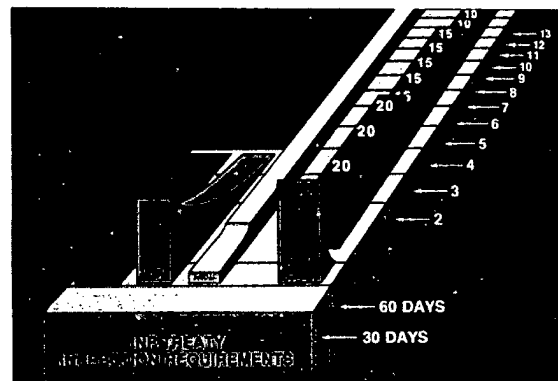
■ **Elimination inspections.** Approximately 7,000 treaty-related items such as missiles, launchers and trucks used for INF purposes are to be destroyed under the treaty. The Soviet Union has some 5,600 such items, which may require around-the-clock destruction for three years; the U.S. has about 1,200 items to be destroyed. The elimination sites will be subject to continuous on-site inspection while weapons are being destroyed.

Elimination will be accomplished by burning weapons, cutting them into pieces, and

of the INF bases and support facilities that are also subject to baseline inspections. Each side can conduct up to 20 inspections annually in the first three years, 15 in the next five years, and 10 in the final five years. The treaty does not provide for any inspections after that.

■ **Portal monitoring.** Beginning August 1 and for the next 13 years, both sides can station 30 inspectors outside each country's principal INF assembly plant. The Soviet plant is in Votkinsk near the Ural mountains. The U.S. facility is a large munitions plant owned by Hercules Inc. in Magna, Utah, 15 miles west of Salt Lake City.

Prohibited INF weapons could be produced at other plants not covered by on-site inspection, but such new missiles would have to be test-fired to be militarily useful; both sides rely on highly sophisticated satellite



OSIA uses this chart to demonstrate the five kinds of on-site inspections specified in the INF treaty. Baseline inspections (blue) establish the initial inventory of INF weapons. Elimination inspections (brown) verify the destruction of these weapons over the next three years. Close-out inspections (green) confirm that former INF facilities are no longer in use. Portal monitoring (yellow) observes shipments leaving former INF assembly plants. Short-notice or challenge inspections (red) confirm that no new INF weapons are being built.

launching up to 100 disarmed missiles to destroy them. Some missiles will actually be cut in half lengthwise with a hand-held, carbon-tipped circular saw. The treaty even provides for posterity: Fifteen disarmed missiles can be kept in "static display" for museum purposes.

The treaty does not cover nuclear warheads, which will be removed before missiles are destroyed. Cmdr. Kendall Pease, OSIA's chief information officer, draws the analogy to bows and arrows. "What we are doing is cutting the string of the bow, breaking the bow and the arrow shaft, and saying, 'You can keep your arrowhead.'"

■ **Close-out inspections.** Within 60 days of the elimination of an INF missile base or support facility, either side can conduct on-site inspections to verify that destruction has been completed.

Having confirmed the inventory of Soviet INF weapons and their destruction in the first three years of the treaty's duration, inspectors then have to make sure the Soviets are not building a covert INF force. That is the job of the last two kinds of inspections, which will take place concurrently with elimination and for 10 years thereafter.

■ **Short-notice or challenge inspections** can be conducted on 16 hours' notice at any

surveillance systems to monitor each other's missile tests. With so much of the most important verification work conducted by satellites, on-site portal monitoring is in a sense largely symbolic; it is an effort to try out on-site procedures and build confidence in them for future use.

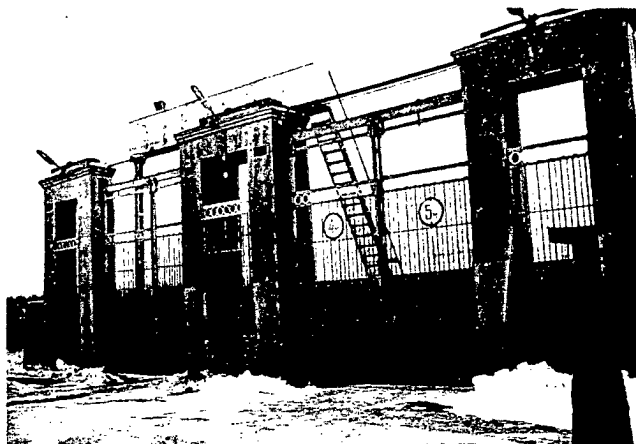
In addition to the cameras, scales and tape measures that short-notice inspectors will use, monitoring teams will also set up highly sophisticated equipment such as truck scales, infrared sensors, and x-ray cameras that can photograph inside missile canisters leaving the factory. Monitors have the right to stop truckloads periodically and look inside them without advance notice. They cannot go inside the factory, but are limited to monitoring the plant's periphery and particularly the "portal" through which its products pass.

OSIA will monitor the Soviet monitors, to make sure they are not spying on American military activity unrelated to INF. Most of the personnel stationed outside the Soviet assembly plant will be employees of a private company under contract to OSIA.

Comparing recreational attractions near the two locations has been a source of some amusement among U.S. and Soviet technical teams. The 30-mile travel radius permitted



Getting ready for glasnost: A technician (top) practices sawing up a U.S. ground-launched cruise missile, 2,400 of which are scheduled to be destroyed under the INF treaty. At right is the Soviet Union's principal INF assembly plant in Votkinsk; the U.S. will monitor these gates for 13 years.



for the Soviet monitoring team includes Salt Lake City and ski areas in the Wasatch mountains; in contrast, recreational possibilities around Votkinsk for the American team, as listed by the Soviets, include ice fishing and mushroom- and berry-picking. With a limit of 30 individual monitors, OSIA might permit spouses who are both members of the team to go to Votkinsk, but will not be sending families with children.

A Careful Interagency Balance

OSIA was born February 1 when a temporary task force from the Joint Chiefs of Staff set up shop in the Coast Guard building. Although part of the Defense Department, OSIA's three deputy directors were carefully chosen from the three other agencies with a particular interest in its operations: OSIA's principal deputy director is George Rueckert from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; the other deputy directors are Ray Smith from the State Department and Edward Curren from the FBI.

Lajoie reports to an executive committee at the Defense Department chaired by Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition

Robert Costello. An interagency group composed of officials from State, DoD, the intelligence agencies and the FBI has advised U.S. negotiators on verification issues, and will review OSIA inspection reports. Interagency disputes go to the National Security Council for resolution, which has already resolved several conflicts over negotiation strategy.

About 60 percent of the agency's headquarters staff of 125 are military personnel, mostly from the Army and the Air Force, the services whose weapons are being eliminated. OSIA is hiring another 200 people from other governmental and military agencies to serve as inspectors and escorts, about a third of them detailed for temporary duty during the initial 60-day baseline inspection period.

Recruitment has not been a problem. "We have been flooded with people wanting to join," says Pease. "We even have reserve officers who have gone on active duty, and others who have withdrawn their retirement applications in order to join up."

"People see this as a unique opportunity to be part of an historic development and to

travel to traditionally denied areas of the Soviet Union," says Lajoie, who is himself fluent in Russian and is no stranger to dealing with Soviet officials. He served for three years in the American Embassy in Moscow, and another three years as Chief of the U.S. Military Liaison Mission in Berlin.

While serving in Berlin, Lajoie was at the center of a major international incident when one of his officers, Maj. Arthur Nicholson, was killed in 1985 while observing Soviet installations in East Germany. Three months later Lajoie was injured when a Soviet truck rammed his car during routine inspection procedures in East Germany.

Lajoie's Optimism

On-site inspection could become a growth industry. The superpowers are actively negotiating on-site inspection methods to verify pending treaties limiting underground nuclear explosions. If the negotiations succeed, OSIA would be the natural agency to administer such inspections.

Most significant is the potential for using on-site inspections to verify a strategic arms agreement. "The job of INF on-site inspection is very complicated," says Lajoie, "but it is infinitely easier than on-site inspection for a START agreement. That would be another whole order of complication." INF deals with nine missile systems, all ground-based, and one portal to monitor; START involves 21 missile systems that are air, ground- and sea-based and have multiple portals. Secretary of State George Shultz has said that INF verification is "child's play" compared to START.

OSIA's budget of \$89 million, taken from redirected DoD funds for this fiscal year, includes about \$40 million for portal monitoring equipment at Votkinsk. The cost of an inspection program for START would be vastly greater, though, as Lajoie comments, "I can't believe it would be more expensive than building, managing and deploying the weapons that the treaty would eliminate."

Looking ahead, the general observes: "We need to go to school in on-site inspection. As we get our feet wet with INF and validate our procedures, we can then fold the lessons learned into the START process. I'm an optimist. I tend to think on-site inspection gives us more confidence in our relationship with the Soviet Union and leads to more predictability, and for that reason it is very useful."

When the superpowers formally ratified the INF treaty at the Moscow summit on June 1, General Secretary Gorbachev declared that "the era of nuclear disarmament has begun." Whether the era continues depends in no small measure on how this little agency on the Anacostia River administers its part in disarmament. □